

# WinZip Basic Information

Did you just download a Zip file and don't know what to do with it? This page explains the basics of Zip files and how to use them.

## What are Zip files?

Zip files (.zip or .zipx) are single files, sometimes called "archives", that contain one or more compressed files. Zip files make it easy to keep related files together and make transporting, e-mailing, downloading and storing data and software faster and more efficient. The Zip format is the most popular compression format used in the Windows environment, and WinZip is the most popular compression utility.

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## Why do people use Zip files?

Zip files compress data and therefore save time and space and make downloading software and transferring e-mail attachments faster. Typical uses for Zip files include:

- **Distributing files on the Internet: Only one download is required to obtain all related files, and file transfer is quicker because the archived files are compressed.**
  - Sending a group of related files to an associate: When you distribute a collection of files as a single Zip file, you benefit from the file grouping as well as compression.
  - Saving disk space: If you have large files that are important but seldom used, such as large data files, simply compress the files into a Zip file and then unzip (or "extract") them only when needed.
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## How do I open a Zip file?

Using Windows operating system:

1. Locate the compressed folder that you want to extract files or folders from.
2. Do one of the following:
  - To extract a single file or folder, double-click the compressed folder to open it. Then, drag the file or folder from the compressed folder to a new location.
  - To extract the entire contents of the compressed folder, right-click the folder, click Extract All, and then follow the instructions.

If you are having trouble with this process you may need a Zip program like WinZip. Click the link below for more info on this product.

[WinZip product information page.](#)